

## **CIRM announces Tools and Technologies Grants to remove obstacles on the path to therapies**

Posted: December 10, 2008

Irvine, Calif., December, 10, 2008 - The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), the state stem cell agency, will be funding 23 grants to 18 institutions aimed at generating new tools and technologies to overcome barriers in stem cell research. At a meeting of the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee, the 29-member governing board for CIRM, members voted to approve more than \$19 million in funding for this round of grants.

The Tools and Technologies Awards are intended to support work that either creates new reagents and methods for stem cell research, or that scales up existing technologies—all designed to accelerate the development of critical therapies for patients with chronic disease or injury. Of the funded grants, 17 were from not-for-profit and six were from for-profit organizations.

"These awards represent the entry of the biotechnology industry into CIRM-funded initiatives to accelerate progress," said Alan Trounson, President of CIRM.

Robert Klein, chairman of the governing board, said supporting a mix of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations capitalizes on California's leadership in both academic science and in biotechnology. "By funding grants in both the academic and biotech sectors CIRM is building a strong network of individuals and organizations that are devoted to overcoming barriers in developing new treatments for debilitating diseases. Teaming biotech partners with not-for-profit research hospitals, institutions and universities provides a critical link in developing the therapies that patients so desperately need," Klein said.

The board voted to continue discussion of the 17 Tools and Technologies grants that the grants working group had placed in the second funding tier. These grants were recommended for funding only if funds permitted. The board will consider these additional grants at the next board meeting.

### **Other ICOC Business**

The board approved concepts for two upcoming grant programs. One was the Disease Team Awards, which are intended to accommodate the transition of basic stem cell biology into therapies. The multi-disciplinary teams are expected to initiate human clinical trials for a stem cell therapy within four years of receiving the award. This is a dramatically compressed timeline compared to the ten or more years that this process can normally take. The RFA for this award will be available in February. The board also approved the concept for the Basic Biology initiative, which is intended to drive innovation toward new therapy discoveries and to provide a strong research portfolio in basic stem cell biology. The RFA for this award is expected to be available later in December.

"These upcoming RFAs show the breadth of CIRM's commitment to advancing basic research to the clinic," said Trounson. "The Basic Biology Awards will ensure a steady influx of new ideas entering the therapy pipelines, while the Disease Team Awards will convert stem cell discoveries into clinical therapies. With these and the other grants we expect to distribute in the upcoming year, CIRM is positioned to drive the full spectrum of biomedical research, from developing the new ideas to breaking down barriers in stem cell research and bringing new therapies to the clinic."

The board voted to impose no limits on the number of proposals for the Disease Team and Basic Biology initiatives. Klein will call a special meeting of the board to discuss details of a pre-application review process including review criteria for reviewing these proposals. This step will ensure that only the most promising, competitive, and responsive proposals require a complete grant application. This process will ensure a manageable number of applications for focused Grants Working Group review and recommendation.

The board also approved a \$150,000 yearly salary for Klein, in accordance with CIRM regulations that specify a salary for the chairman. The salary constitutes a 50 percent time commitment. Klein has worked in the role for more than three years on a pro bono basis. "After three years of contributing my time to the agency without a salary, the work load and the current economy make it impossible for me to continue at the same level without compensation," Klein said.

The board also voted to fund one additional New Cell Lines Awards grant. This application was carried over from the June 27, 2008

meeting when the governing board initially considered other applications under this RFA. The President of CIRM decided to approve a new review for this application. The new review by the grants working group resulted in a recommendation to fund the application, which ICOC voted to accept today.

The following grants were approved at today's meeting:

#### Tools and Technologies

Application Number	Institution	PI Name	Total Budget
RT1-01001-1	Stanford University	Blau, Professor Helen M.	\$949,608
RT1-01012-1	VistaGen Therapeutics, Inc.	Bonham, Dr. Kristina C.	\$971,558
RT1-01019-1	University of California, Davis	Tarantal, Dr. Alice F.	\$842,149
RT1-01021-1	University of California, Berkeley	Tijan, Dr. Robert T.	\$918,000
RT1-01022-1	University of California, Los Angeles	Tseng, Professor Hsian-Rong	\$914,096
RT1-01024-1	Fluidigm Corporation	Unger, Dr. Marc A.	\$749,520
RT1-01027-1	Gamma Medica-Ideas, Inc.	Wagenaar, Dr. Douglas Jay	\$949,748
RT1-01028-1	University of Southern California	Wang, Dr. Pin	\$951,104
RT1-01052-1	University of California, Merced	Cleary, Professor Michael David	\$483,803
RT1-01053-1	University of California, Santa Barbara	Clegg, Professor Dennis O	\$599,998
RT1-01055-1	University of California, Berkeley	Conolly, Professor Steven M.	\$882,430
RT1-01057-1	City of Hope National Medical Center	Couture, Dr. Larry A.	\$882,929
RT1-01063-1	University of California, San Diego	Dowdy, Dr. Steven F.	\$925,200
RT1-01074-1	University of California, Irvine	Flanagan, Dr. Lisa A.	\$871,627
RT1-01093-1	Novocell, Inc.	Kroon, Dr. Evert Johan	\$827,072
RT1-01095-1	University of California, Santa Cruz	Kubby, Dr. Joel	\$552,985
RT1-01097-1	University of California, Davis	Lam, Dr. Kit S	\$835,540
RT1-01103-1	Scripps Research Institute	Barbas, Professor Carlos F.	\$1,146,312
RT1-01107-1	Invitrogen Corporation	Liu, Dr. Ying	\$869,262
RT1-01108-1	Scripps Research Institute	Loring, Dr. Jeanne F	\$1,141,124
RT1-01120-1	University of California, Irvine	Nalcioğlu, Dr. Orha	\$719,798
RT1-01126-1	University of California, Los Angeles	Phelps, Dr. Michael E.	\$914,096
RT1-01143-1	Vala Sciences, Inc.	McDonough, Dr. Patrick M.	\$906,629

\$19,804,588

#### New Cell Lines

Application Number	Institution	PI Name	Total Budget
RL1-00642-1	Scripps Research Institute	Dr. Shen Ding	\$1,719,468
Previously Approved			\$23,181,261
Total			\$24,900,729

#### All Grants to Date

Institution	Research Grants	Facilities Grants	Total Grants	Funds (Requested & Awards)
Stanford University	31	2	33	\$94,845,918
UC San Francisco	26	2	28	\$82,378,058
UCLA	21	2	23	\$53,144,184
UC Irvine	18	2	20	\$52,818,235
USC	13	2	15	\$49,418,708
San Diego Consortium	0	1	1	\$43,000,000
UC Davis	9	2	11	\$37,444,275
UC San Diego	19	1	20	\$33,778,528
UC Berkeley	7	2	9	\$31,254,919
Buck Institute	2	2	4	\$25,429,364
Gladstone Institutes	10	1	11	\$18,787,142
UC Santa Cruz	6	2	8	\$17,126,621
The Burnham Institute	12	1	13	\$18,180,796
The Salk Institute	9	1	10	\$16,036,730
CHLA	5	1	6	\$11,701,08
Scripps	7	1	8	\$13,324,893
UC Merced	4	1	5	\$8,494,301
UC Santa Barbara	2	2	4	\$7,287,929
UC Riverside	3	1	4	\$6,055,762
Ludwig	3	0	3	\$2,473,053
CalTech	1	0	1	\$2,071,823
City of Hope	4	0	4	\$2,918,971

San Diego State	1	0	1	\$1,725,830
HBMRI	1	0	1	\$714,654
CHORI	1		1	\$55,000
Novocell, Inc.	2		2	\$876,022
Cedars-Sinai	1		1	\$46,886
Vala Sciences, Inc.	1		1	\$906,629
VistaGen Therapeutics, Inc.	1		1	\$971,558
Gamma Medica-Ideas, Inc.	1		1	\$949,748
Invitrogen Corporation	1		1	\$869,262
Fluidigm Corporation	1		1	\$749,520
Totals	224	29	253	\$635,836,402

**About CIRM:** The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) was established in 2005 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 253 research and facility grants totaling more than \$635 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit [www.cirm.ca.gov](http://www.cirm.ca.gov).

Contact:
Amy Adams 415-396-9254 650-796-3695(mobile)
Ellen Rose (650) 387-8746

**Source URL:** <http://www.cirm.ca.gov/about-cirm/newsroom/press-releases/12102008/cirm-announces-tools-and-technologies-grants-remove>